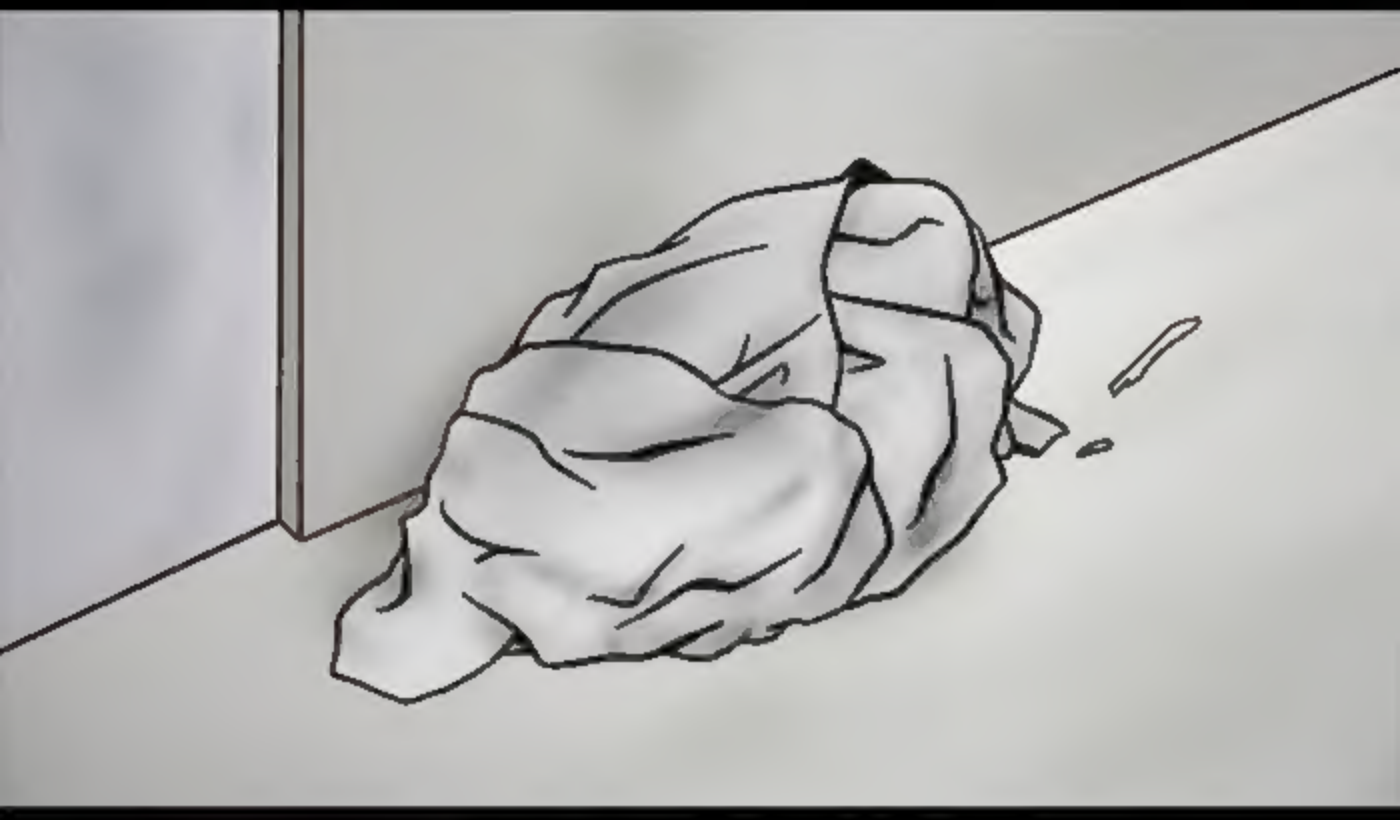
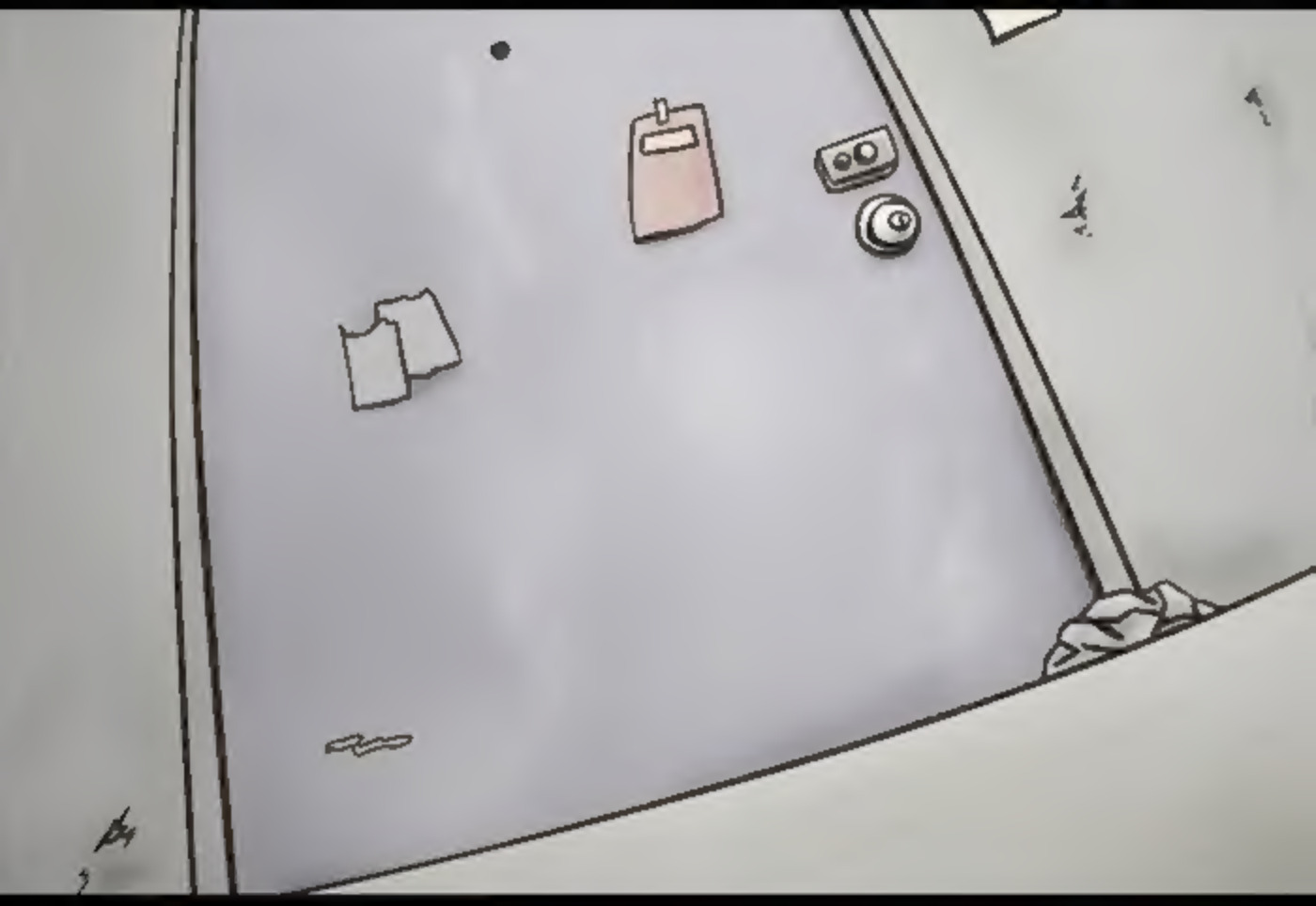
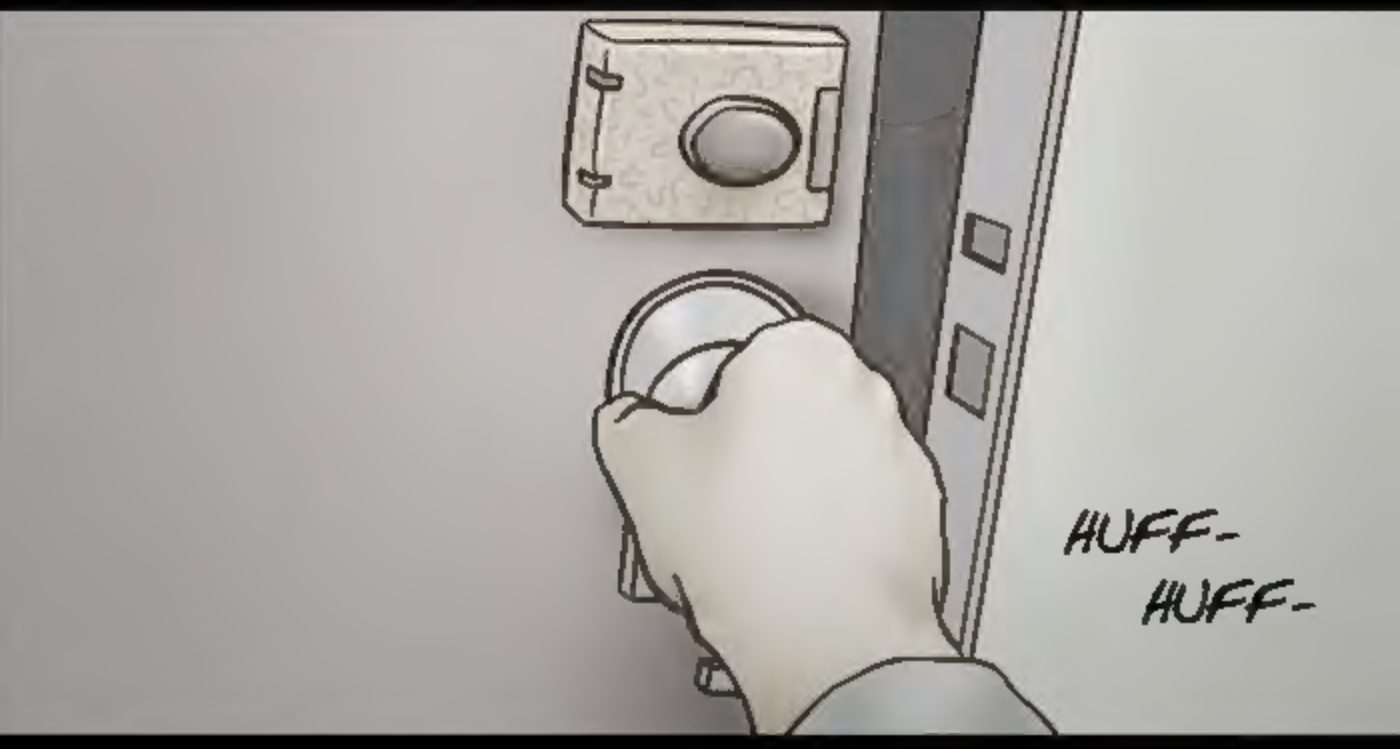




CREEAAK-

YOU PROBABLY DON'T UNDERSTAND.
I BET YOU CAN'T RELATE AT ALL.

THAT'S FINE,
I UNDERSTAND YOUR LACK OF UNDERSTANDING.



I WAS LIKE THAT TOO. WHENEVER I HEARD
THINGS LIKE "DEPRESSION" AND "MYSOPHOBIA"

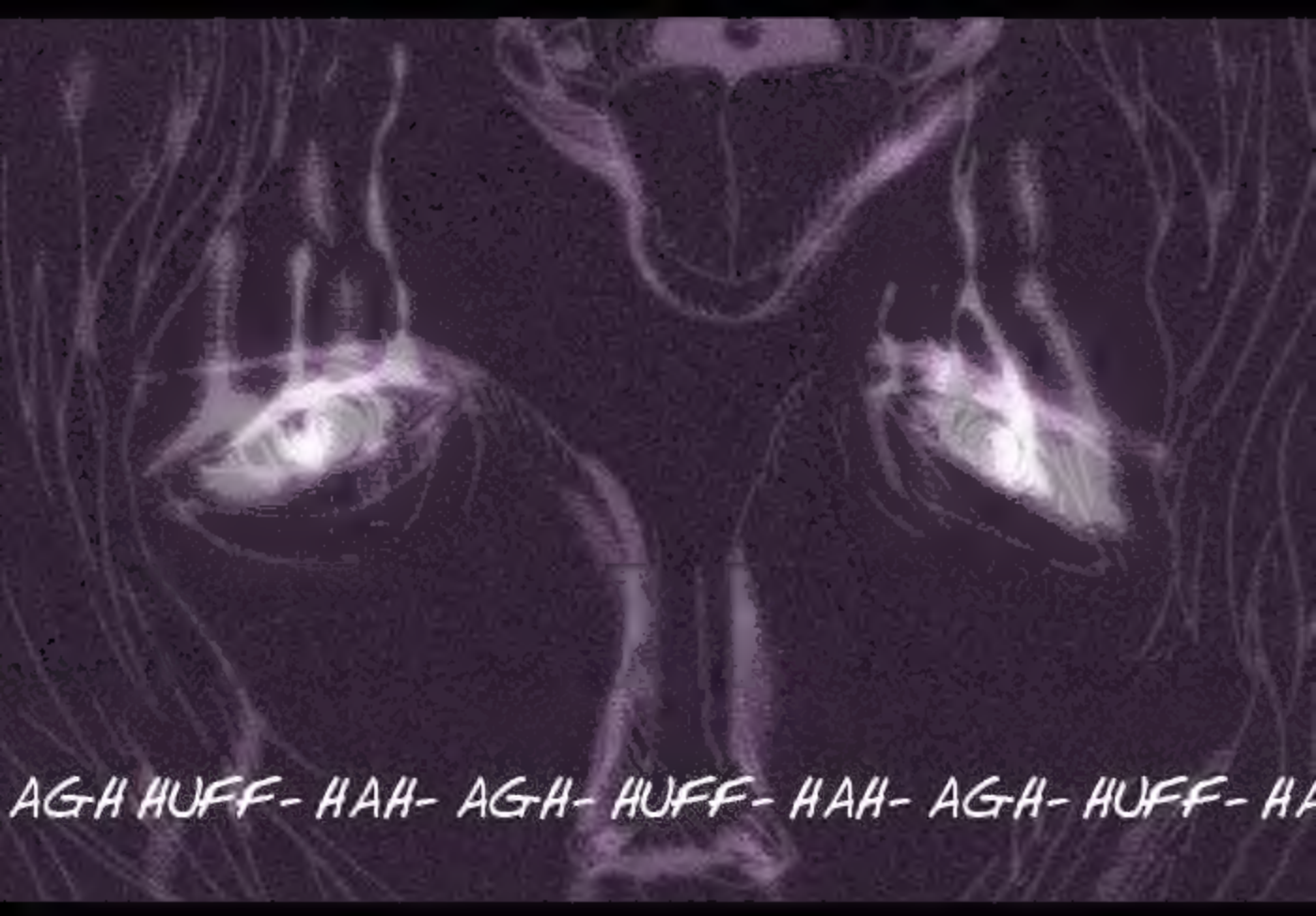
I WOULD LAUGH ABOUT IT, THINKING THAT THOSE
WERE FOR WEAK-MINDED PEOPLE.

JUST AS IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE
FOR A PERSON WHO HAS NEVER WON THE LOTTERY
TO UNDERSTAND EVEN A HUNDREDTH OF
THE ECSTASY OF WINNING THE LOTTERY.

UNLESS SOMEONE HAS EXPERIENCED
THIS STIFLINGLY HEAVY, STICKY AIR.

AND THE ENDLESS STREAM OF IMAGES OF ACCIDENTS
AND DEATH BEING PLAYED IN THEIR MIND,

THEY CAN'T EVEN BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND
THE FEELING.



SINCE PEOPLE

TEND TO FEEL MORE PAIN FROM A
THORN IN THEIR OWN FINGER

THAN FROM A KNIFE IN SOMEONE ELSE'S GUT.

WHEW-

IT'S NOT THAT I HAVEN'T CONSIDERED
ANY ALTERNATIVES.

LIKE GIVING SOMEONE ELSE POWER OF ATTORNEY
AND HIRING THEM TO BE A SUBSTITUTE RECIPIENT

OR HAVING A CAR TAKE ME THERE AFTER TAKING SOME SLEEPING PILLS AND PASSING OUT.

HOWEVER...

THIS PERSON'S PHONE IS OFF.
SO YOU WILL BE REDIRECTED TO VOICEMAIL.

TAP-

THE WOUND OF BEING BETRAYED BY THE PERSON I TRUSTED THE MOST.

THE TRAUMA OF REALIZING THAT THERE IS NO ONE IN THE WORLD WHOM I CAN TRUST.

YOU A$$HOLE!!

THESE HAVE RUINED ANY PLANS FOR ALTERNATIVES.

FRIDAY
FORBIDDEN TALES
禁曜日

052. JACKPOT (2)

PERHAPS THIS IS "PUNISHMENT."

MY WIFE OPPOSED IT.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT A JOINT GUARANTEE IS? IT'S WAY MORE DANGEROUS THAN A REGULAR GUARANTEE! IF IT GOES WRONG, WE COULD END UP ON THE STREET!

SHE CRIED AS SHE CLUNG TO ME, SCREAMING AND TRYING TO STOP ME.

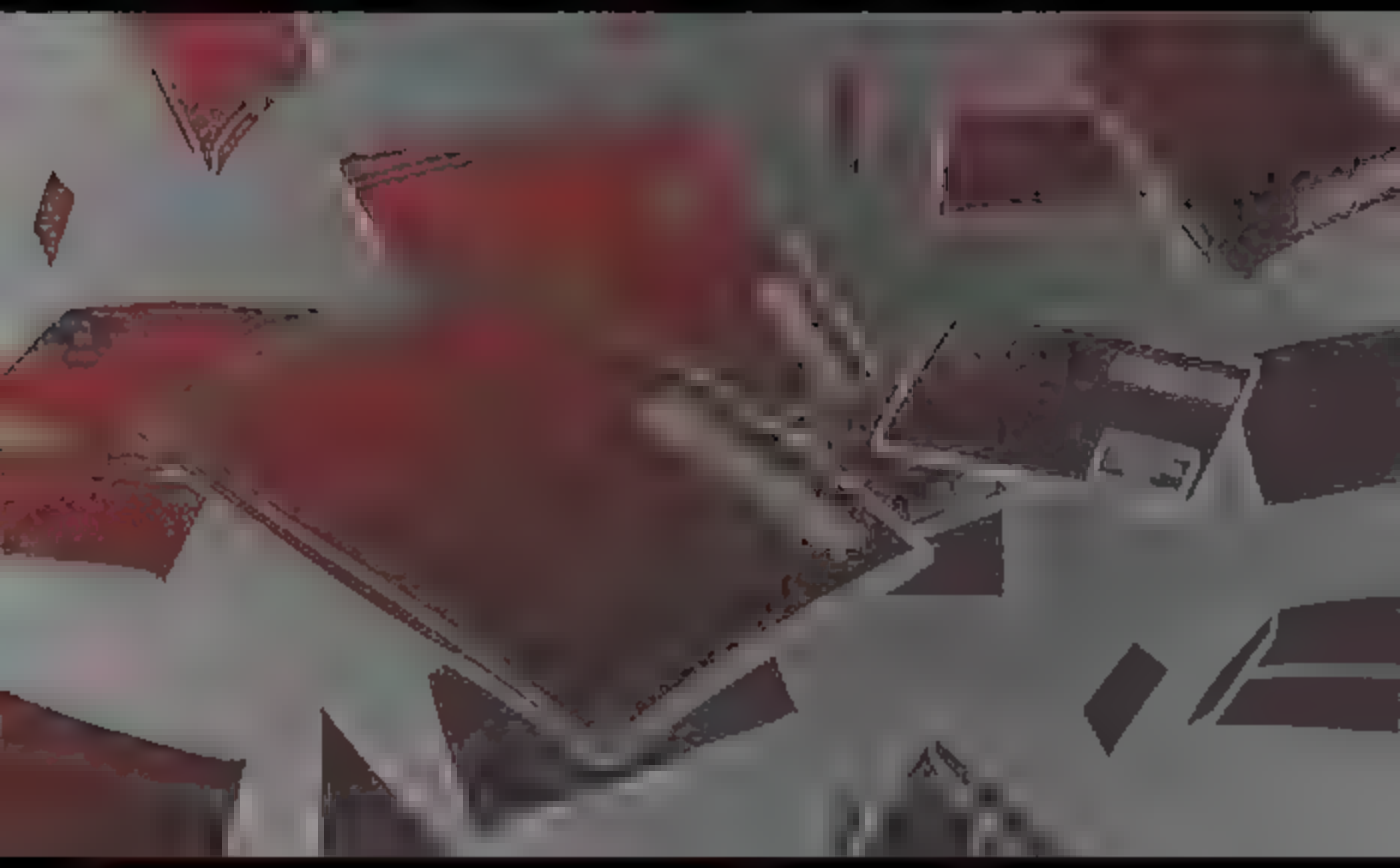
THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME I HAD EVER SEEN MY WIFE, WHO WAS NORMALLY SO CALM, LIKE THAT.

DON'T BE RIDICULOUS! HE'S A JOINT REPRESENTATIVE! OF COURSE HE'S GOING TO SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY!
WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER FOR OVER 20 YEARS! HE HELPED LOOK AFTER MY MOM! AND HE PAID FOR MY DAD'S FUNERAL!

ACTUALLY, I WAS SO FIXATED
ON THAT TITLE OF "REPRESENTATIVE"

THAT I FORCED US TO GO THROUGH
WITH THE GUARANTEE,

AND THE RESULT...



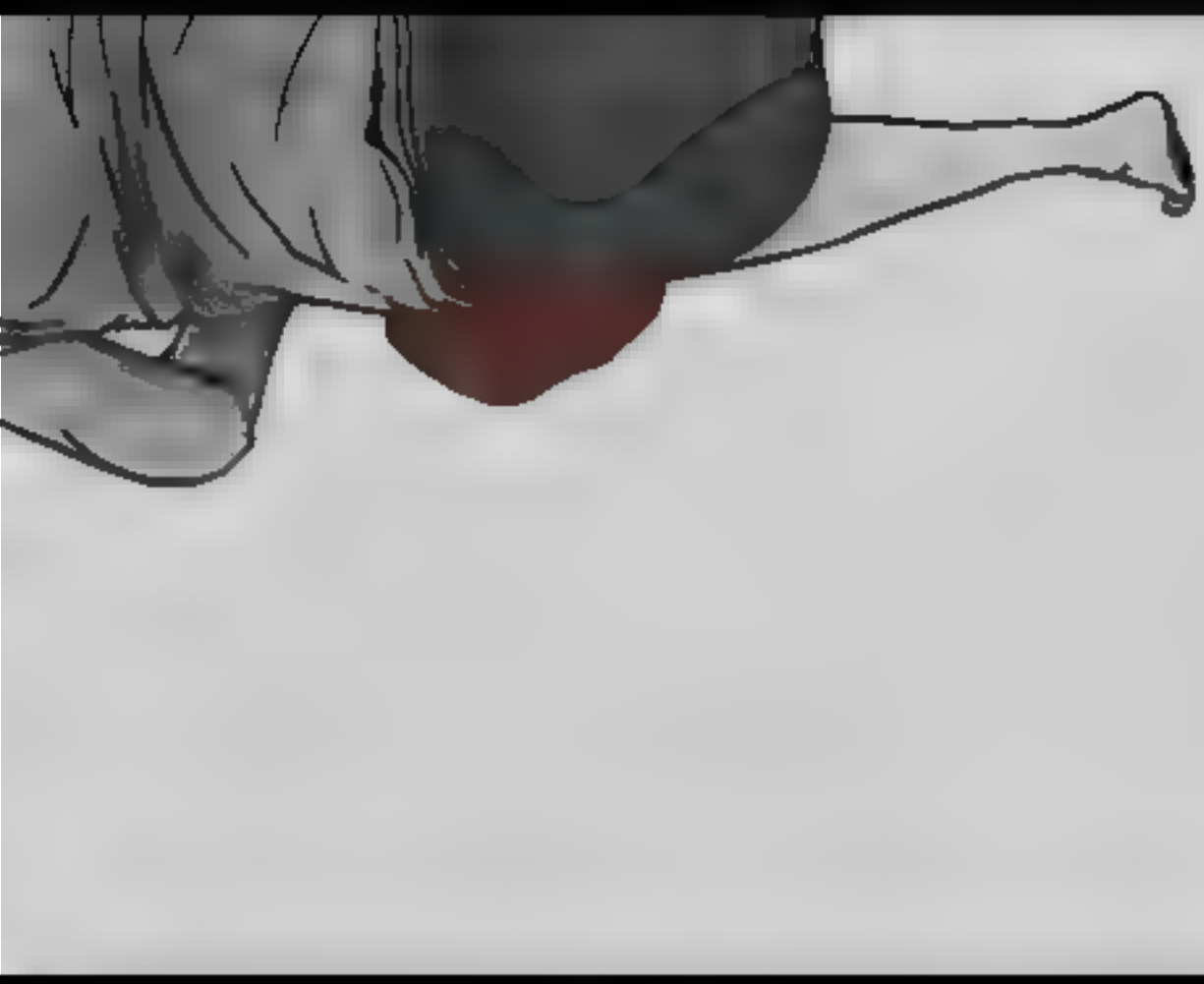
BUT THE REAL "SIN" STARTED FROM THAT DAY.

MY WIFE BECAME A TARGET FOR RELEASING
ALL OF MY PENT-UP FRUSTRATION AND RAGE.

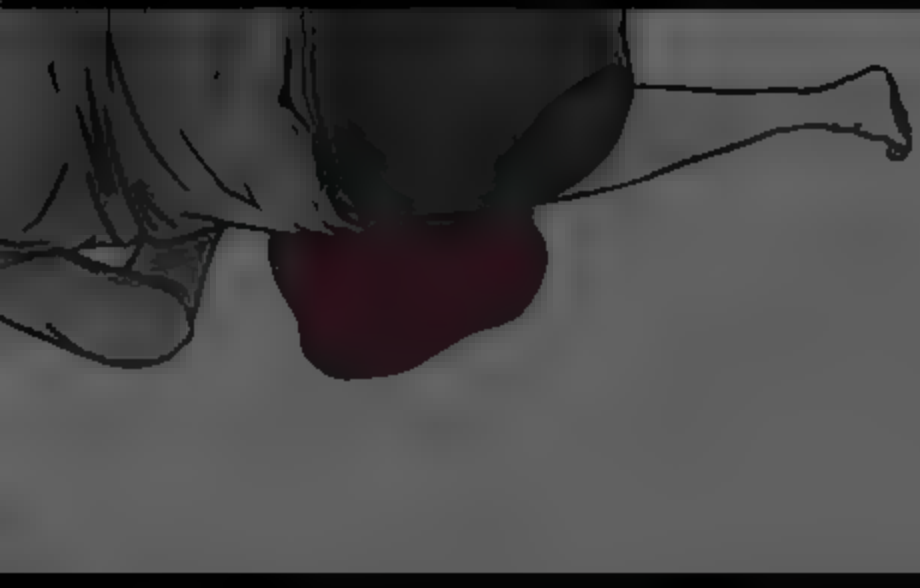
WHY DIDN'T YOU STOP ME? WHY???
AND THEN...

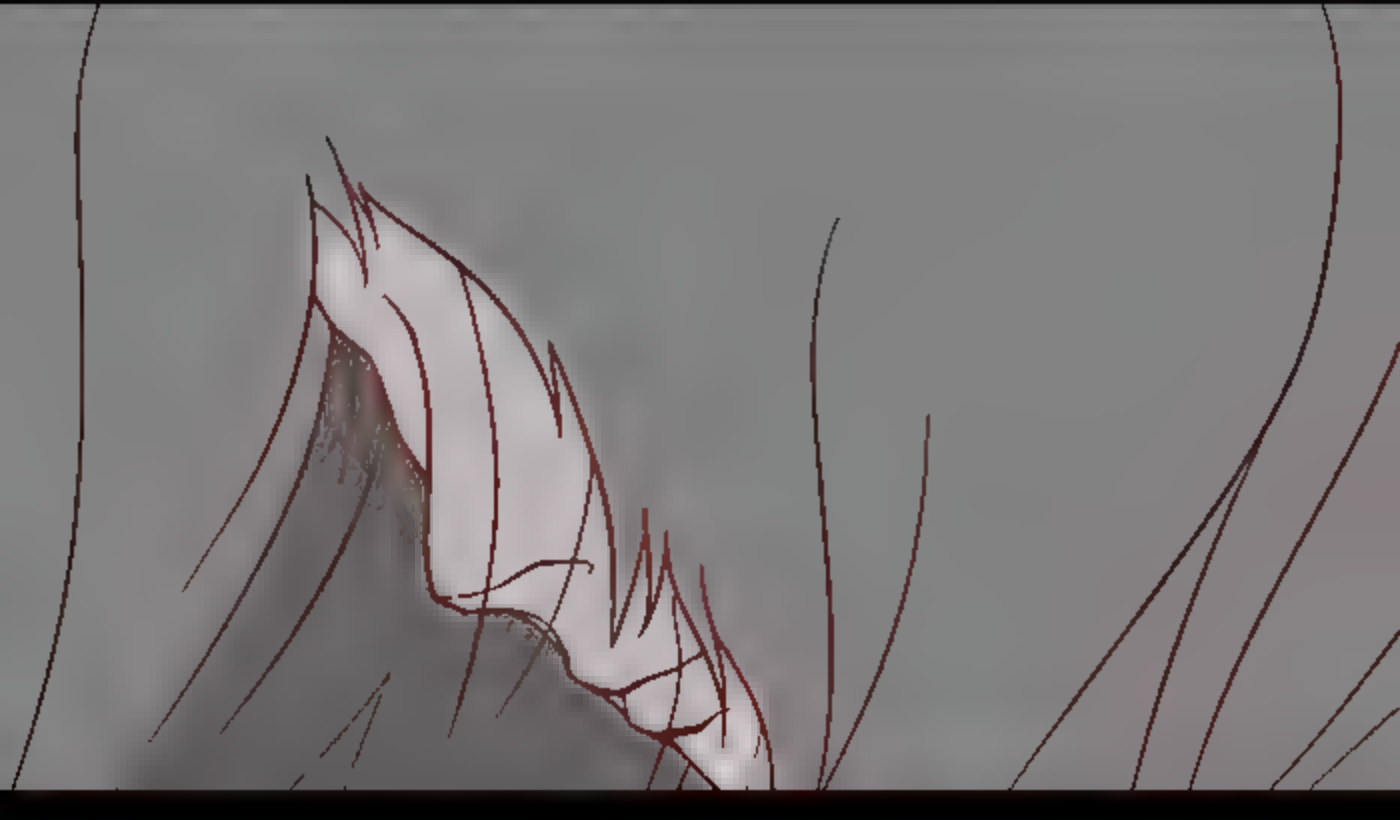
AGH!!!

BLOOD.



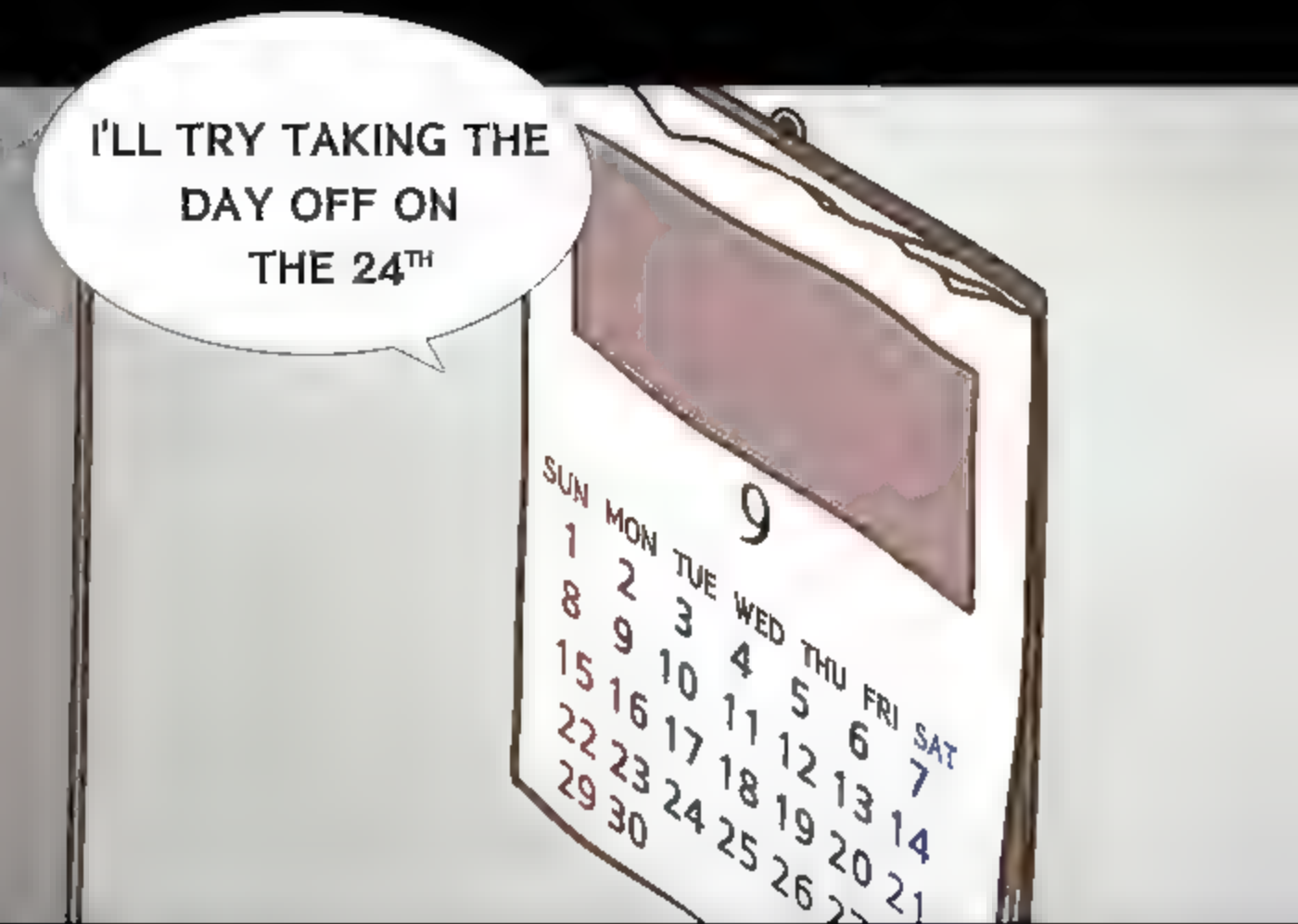
A MISCARRIAGE OF THE FIRST CHILD
WE HAD BOTH WANTED SO BADLY.





THAT'S WHY

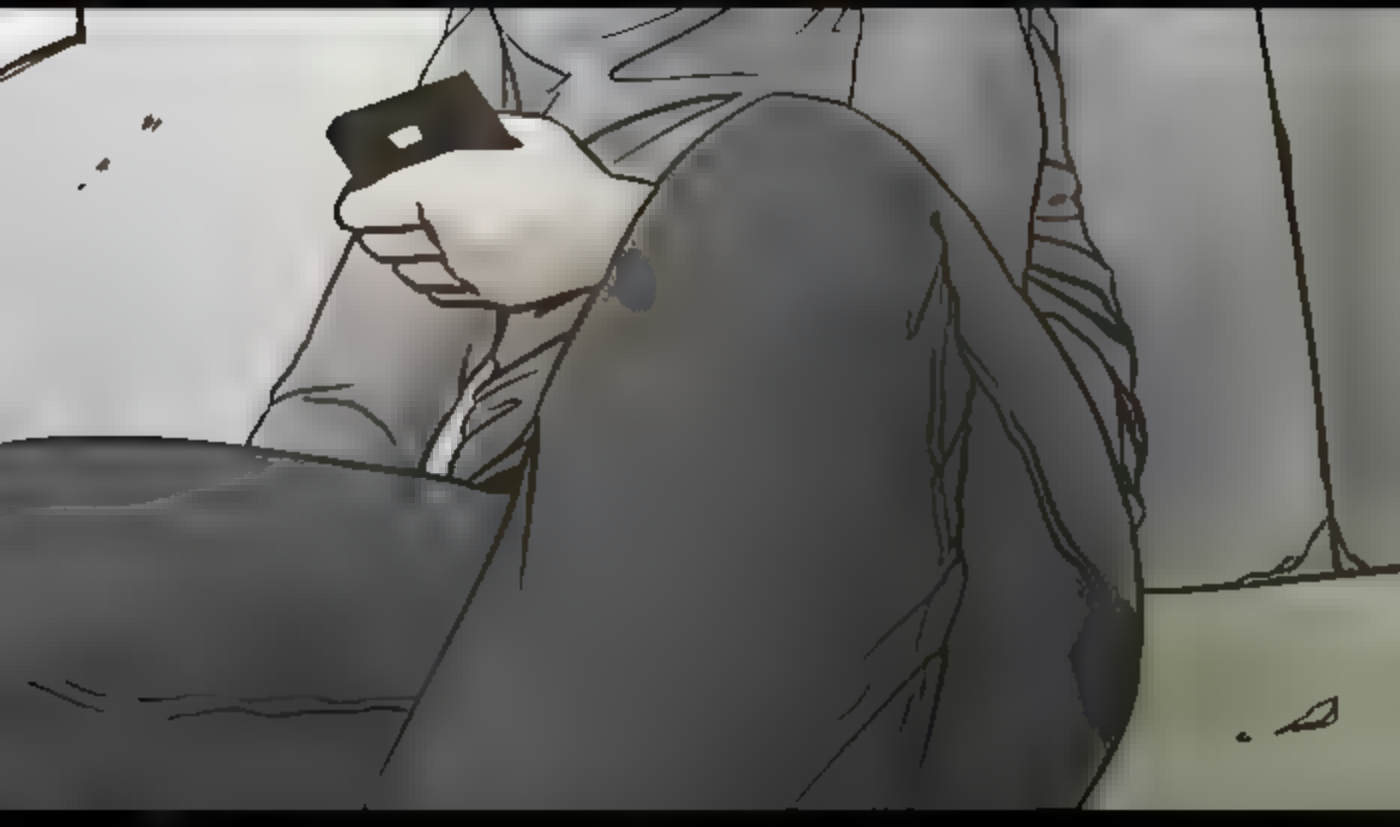
THIS MAY BE A "PUNISHMENT."



COME WITH ME.
WE'LL HOLD HANDS,
AND GO TOGETHER.

MY WIFE IS HELPING ME, IN SPITE OF HOW I AM.

ME, THE MAN WHO WAS LIKE, OR RATHER,
WORSE THAN A BEAST.



I KNOW THAT THIS MAY NOT EVEN BE
LOVE OR COMPASSION.

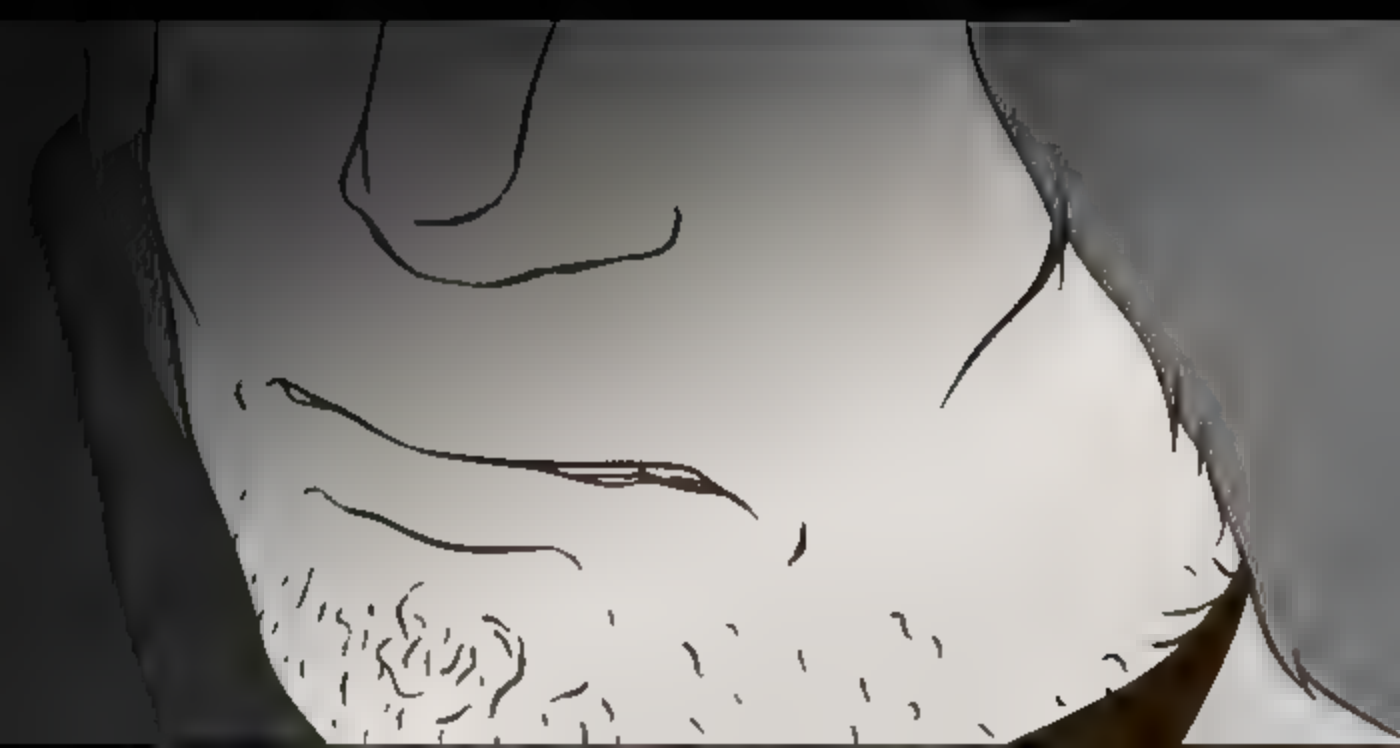
I KNOW THAT SHE MAY NOT HAVE HELPED ME IF I HADN'T WON THE LOTTERY.

I ALSO KNOW THAT HER PURPOSE MAY NOT BE SOMETHING THAT I HAVE, BUT SOMETHING THAT I WILL HAVE.

BUT I DON'T CARE. THIS IS ACTUALLY WHAT I WANT.

IF THROUGH MY WIFE I CAN ATONE AND HEAL
MYSELF OF THE TRAUMA,

THE SIN OF MY FRIEND AND HIS BETRAYAL,
MY WIFE AND HER MISCARRIAGE..



IF I CAN JUST DO THAT,
IF I CAN GO BACK TO A NORMAL LIFE,

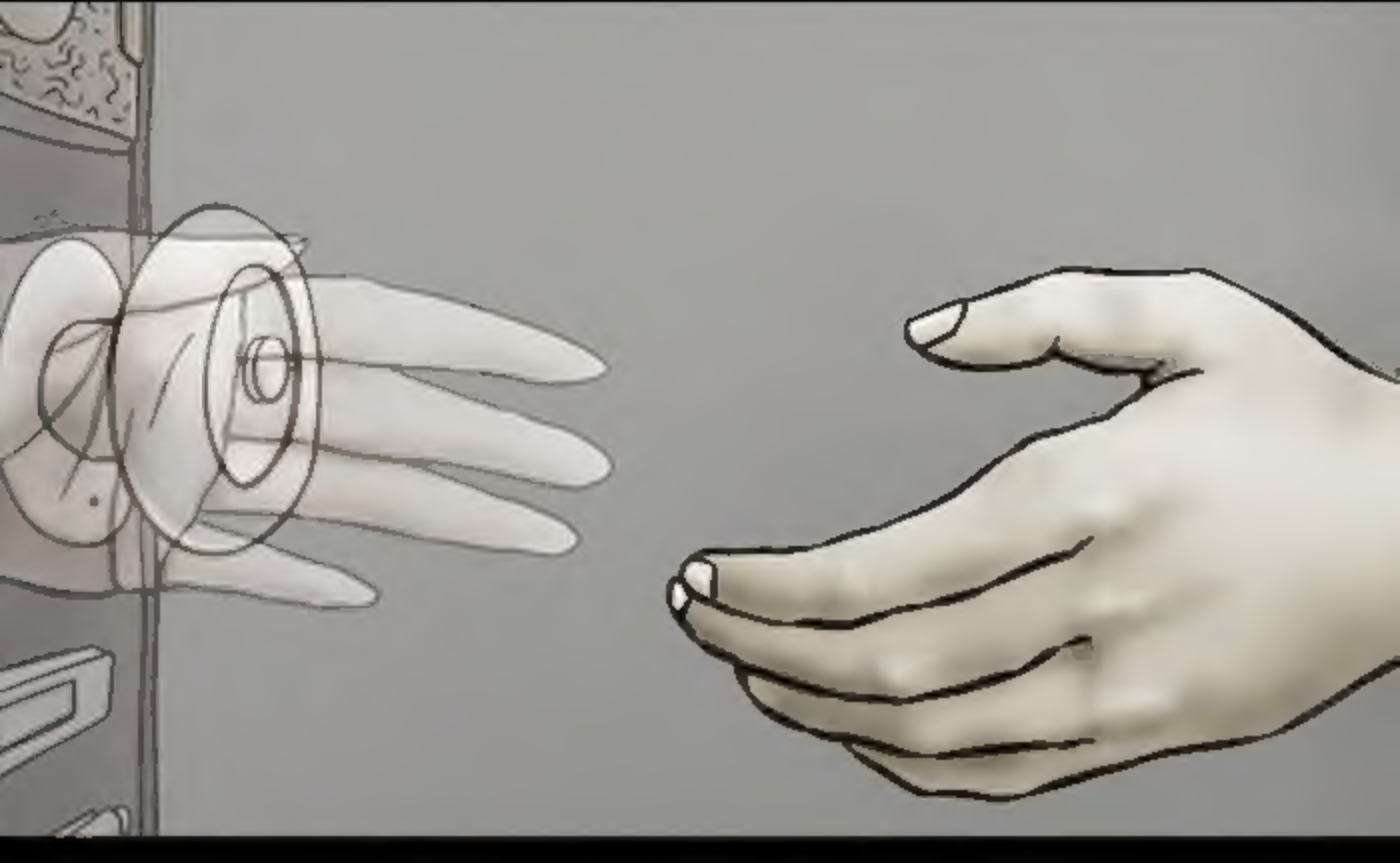
I THINK THAT SOMETHING LIKE MONEY
WILL ONLY BE A SECONDARY ISSUE.

WHEW...

THAT'S WHY,

I HAVE TO LEAVE.

I HAVE TO TAKE



HER HAND.

NEXT WEEK, JACKPOT (3)

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